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U. S. Department of Agriculture

Housekeepers' Chat.

Release: Monday, October 13, 1930.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "A Number of Things." Information, including menu, from Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Bulletins available: "Fitting Dresses and Blouses."

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"The world is so full of a number of things, in October," remarked my hard-working friend. "Dresses to make, three school lunches to pack, new curtains to buy. How can I keep cool and calm and collected, with so much work to be done?"

"Take it easy," I said. "Don't let little things upset you."

"How easy to say," laughed my friend. "But how difficult to do, Aunt Sammy!"

"You work too hard," I said. "Can't you find time to rest a little more?"

"When?" asked my friend. "Honestly, Aunt Sammy, my work has reached such a state that it really makes me cranky and cross."

My friend was worried about herself, and I saw that it was time for my annual lecture.

"Let me read you a bit of practical prose," I said. "This is the way it goes:

"When a meal that is ten minutes late upsets your disposition for the rest of the day, when Tom's muddy tracks in the kitchen nearly make you lose your temper, when the household duties seem to pile up endlessly, it is probably time to take an hour or even a day off to rest, for it usually is tiredness that makes you cross and irritable.

"But why not think it over, to see if each day's work can be made easier? Perhaps a high stool in the kitchen will help by allowing you to take the weight off your feet a while. Such a stool can be used at the sink, while you are preparing vegetables, or washing dishes, or even for the ironing. Just because you never sat down to such jobs doesn't mean that you can't begin now. Or move the work-table or cabinet and the supply closets nearer the sink and stove to save steps. Get a service wagon or tray-on-wheels to cut down the number of trips between the dining room and the pantry.

"Collect the mending bag, the darning, the sewing machine and all the rest of the sewing equipment in one room, or in one corner of a room, and keep it there so you will have just one place to go when you have a few free minutes to sew. And train Tom to wipe his own muddy tracks, and the rest of the family to put away their own belongings -- train them cheerfully, of course, but firmly just the same. Plan definitely, so that you can take life a bit more easily and the wrinkles will begin to smooth out and the whole world will look brighter."

"Pretty good advice," remarked my friend, after I had finished my lecture. "Pretty good advice, Aunt Sammy, It is hard to be cheerful and optimistic, when you're all tired out, from over-work. I wouldn't have been so pessimistic this morning, if I hadn't struggled so hard over a dress that I'm making for myself. Did you ever make yourself a dress, and not have it fit anywhere?"

"Yes," I said. "Did you use a commercial pattern?"

"I did," said my friend. "I used a commercial pattern supposed to fit my figure. Why did you ask, Aunt Sammy?"

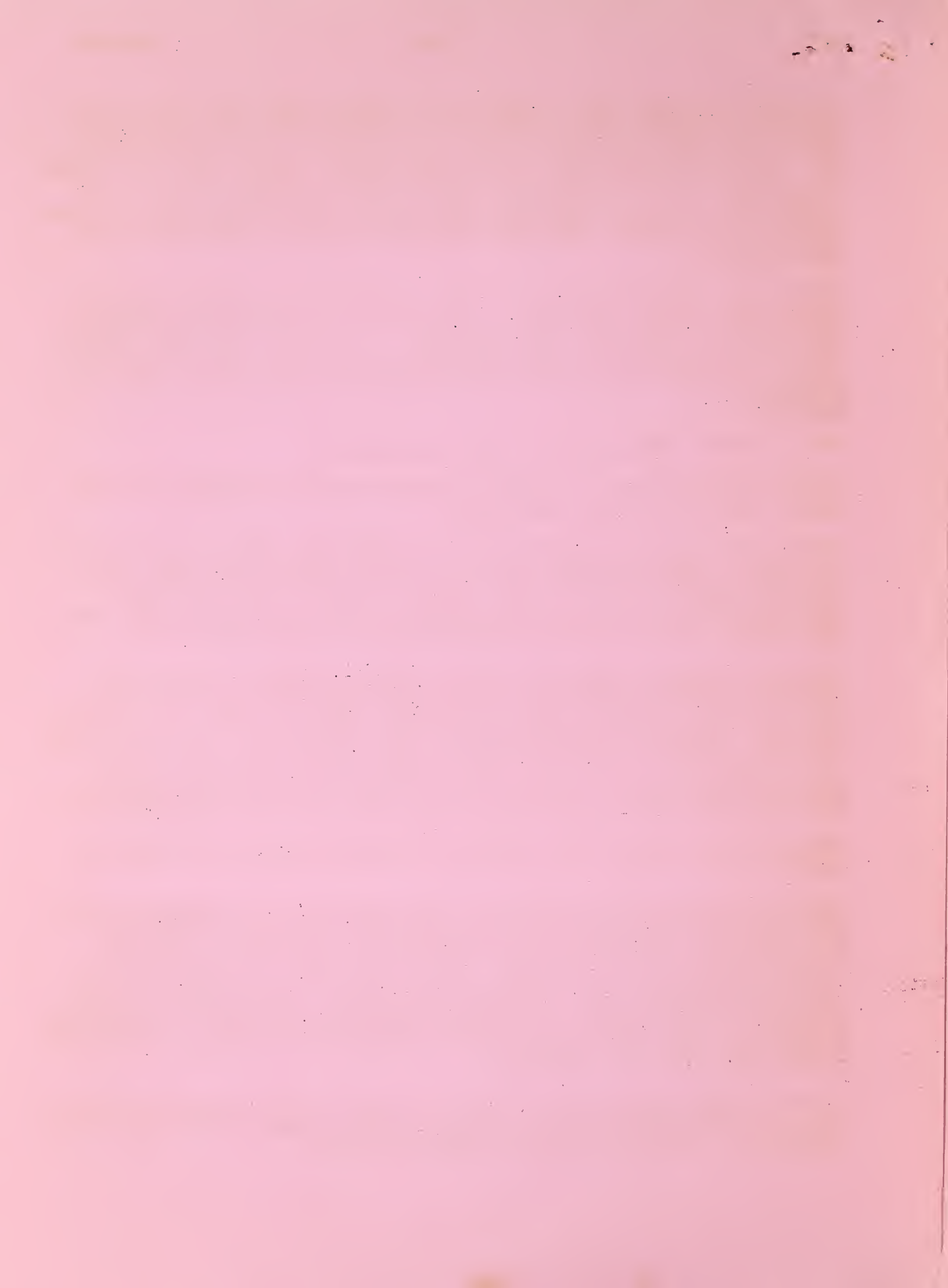
"You'd better use a foundation pattern," I told her. "Make one to fit your own figure. That's the only sure way to have a pattern that fits. By a foundation pattern, I mean a plain pattern, fitted to your own figure, with normal seam lines, neck, and armholes. With this pattern, which fits you exactly, you can check commercial patterns, and make them fit you."

"Make your foundation pattern of a firm cotton material. In making the foundation pattern, follow the commercial pattern which seems to fit you best. Test the commercial pattern carefully, before you cut into the cotton material. Sometimes a pattern bought by bust measure does not fit any other part of the figure. If you can find a pattern which fits your shoulders, you can alter it to fit the bust, before cutting the foundation pattern. Take the measurements of your figure, and check them on the paper pattern."

"What would you suggest that I make the foundation pattern of?" asked my friend.

"Black-and-white checked gingham is a good material for the foundation pattern, because in this material the crosswise and lengthwise threads are so easily seen. Stitch the seam and dart lines, with bright red thread, so the pattern will be reversible. Stitch all pieces of the pattern one-eighth inch from the edge, to prevent stretching. You can design a number of styles, of both dresses and blouses, from this one pattern. A foundation pattern which fits your figure takes the guesswork out of making a new dress. It also saves time, and material."

"I do not doubt that," said my friend. "I shall make a foundation pattern, before I attempt another dress for myself. Do you happen to have any printed instructions, which might help the home dressmaker?"



I gave my friend a copy of "Fitting Dresses and Blouses," which is a handy booklet for women who do much dressmaking, for themselves or for other people. The bulletin contains directions for making a foundation pattern, setting in sleeves, and doing various other things which puzzle home dressmakers.

But we have talked about dressmaking quite long enough. Let's change the subject. The menu today is a particularly easy one. I planned it for my hard-working friend, who doesn't have much time to prepare fancy meals.

Here is the menu: Scalloped Salmon; Peas; Buttered Fall Turnips; Grape and Orange Salad; and Cheese Wafers.

Scalloped Salmon is a good dish for October, or any other month, for that matter. Six ingredients, for Scalloped Salmon:

1 pound can of salmon.	2 tablespoons butter.
1-1/4 cups milk.	1/4 teaspoon salt, and
2 tablespoons flour.	1/2 cup buttered bread crumbs.

Six ingredients, for Scalloped Salmon: (Repeat)

Prepare a sauce of the milk, flour, and butter. Place a layer of the salmon in the bottom of a greased baking dish. Pour some of the sauce over the salmon. Add another layer of salmon, then more sauce. Cover the top with buttered bread crumbs. Bake until the sauce bubbles and the crumbs are brown.

And that's all there is to that. When you make the Orange and Grape Salad, use seedless grapes, or split open the others and take out the seeds.

The menu, again: Scalloped Salmon; Peas; Buttered Fall Turnips; Grape and Orange Salad; and Cheese Wafers.

Tomorrow I'll answer a few questions, and give you my prize recipe for Beef Loaf.

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